



Director of
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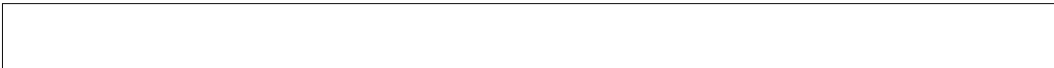
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NATO: Meetings of Defense Ministers

//NATO defense ministers at meetings this week plan to reaffirm the Alliance's nuclear strategy and to call for improved conventional defenses.// []

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//NATO defense ministers are to open the Nuclear Planning Group meeting today by endorsing US negotiating strategies in the START and INF talks at Geneva, including recent proposals to negotiate expanded nuclear confidence-building measures with the USSR. They also are to note that preparations for intermediate-range missile sites are now under way and that deployments will begin in late 1983 unless there is progress at Geneva.// []

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//The ministers are scheduled to meet tomorrow and Thursday in the Defense Planning Committee, where they plan to highlight the need to improve conventional forces by exploiting new technologies. They intend to acknowledge that events outside the NATO region may threaten Alliance security, but most are opposed to extensive planning for out-of-area contingencies.// []

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Comment: //Controversies over arms control or defense modernization probably will not become acute at the meetings. Some Allies, notably the British and West Germans, may try to smooth the way for deploying the new missiles by publicizing the reduction of older nuclear air defense weapons in Western Europe.// []

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//As the dates for INF deployments in 1983 approach, however, the Allies are likely to urge progress in the Geneva arms control talks. They probably will seek assurances that the costs of new conventional weapons are politically realistic, that European defense industries will benefit, and that NATO's doctrine of flexible response will not be altered.// []

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//The most contentious issue at the meetings is likely to be Greece's last-minute withdrawal from NATO's Apex Express exercise in early November. Cancellation of the exercise angered the other participants.// []

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SPAIN: Socialists' Cabinet List

//The names of Socialist ministers leaked to the press over the weekend indicate the new government intends to maintain continuity in domestic policy and develop greater independence in foreign policy.// [redacted]

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//Felipe Gonzalez, whom the parliament is to elect formally as president this week, has not contested the accuracy of a press report identifying his cabinet ministers.// [redacted]

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Comment: //The generally young, pragmatic ministers come mainly from Gonzalez's inner circle. They also include a few independents.// [redacted]

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//Gonzalez wants to avoid the personality conflicts and divisions on policy that discredited the outgoing government. Most of the appointments appear consistent with his goals, but the naming of Alfonso Guerra, Gonzalez's longtime lieutenant, as Vice President could cause friction. Although Guerra has played an important role in uniting the Socialists behind Gonzalez, he also has clashed with many of the new ministers.// [redacted]

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//Recent public statements by incoming Economic Minister Miguel Boyer indicate the Socialists' economic policy initially will be cautious. The appointment of Narcis Serra, the mayor of Barcelona, as Defense Minister will be well received in high-level military circles. Communication between the government and the military will be especially important because the Socialists will have to make some major decisions affecting the military soon after taking office.// [redacted]

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//The designation of career diplomat Fernando Moran as Foreign Minister signals a more activist, independent, and Third World - oriented policy. Gonzalez may intend Moran's appointment as a gesture to the Socialists' left wing. The Socialist leader, however, probably will personally make most major foreign policy decisions.// [redacted]

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EL SALVADOR: New Guerrilla Drive

The insurgents recently have intensified their attacks in the northeast, presenting government forces with a difficult choice of what to defend. [REDACTED]

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//A major push from Morazan into La Union Department, coupled with continued harassment elsewhere, has enabled the guerrillas to take some new towns and to expand their control in the region. Several small government garrisons have been overrun, and reinforcements thus far have been unable to break through guerrilla defenses.// [REDACTED]

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[REDACTED]

Comment: The guerrillas in the northeast now appear strongly entrenched and well supplied. Moreover, the latest attacks indicate that, despite their forced withdrawal in Chalatenango, they intend to retain the initiative elsewhere. The Army may have to leave economic targets unprotected in order to concentrate on the guerrillas in the northeast and avoid a possible military and political reverse. [REDACTED]

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NICARAGUA: Sandinista Political Maneuvering

The Sandinistas are willing to discuss nominal liberalization with the domestic opposition, but only on their own terms.

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The Council of State recently appointed a special committee with token representation from the opposition to draft a law governing political party activity for consideration in January. The move responds to a government coalition proposal that rules for political parties and their access to the media be established to pave the way for elections in 1985.

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The Sandinistas have publicized the initiative by sending delegations to Western Europe and by announcing plans to send other missions abroad to study parliamentary systems. The Socialist International welcomed the proposals in a resolution on Central America at its recent meeting in Switzerland and will send a special committee to Nicaragua this week.

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The president of the opposition's Democratic Coordinating Board has told the US Embassy it will insist censorship be lifted before further discussions on the political process take place. Sandinista officials have indicated that they will relax the state of emergency enough to permit public discussion of the issues, but last week they closed down the only opposition newspaper for two days for disseminating material censored from recent editions.

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Comment: Although the Sandinistas appear willing to make some concessions to appease their critics at home and abroad, they remain determined to create political institutions that will ensure their continuation in power. Most in the democratic opposition worry that, by participating in additional discussion of the proposed laws, they will only help legitimize the regime. At the same time, however, they probably also fear the consequences of a total break with the Sandinistas.

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POLAND: Divisions in Solidarity

Leaflets attacking Walesa's loyalty to the movement are circulating in Gdansk.

Meanwhile, the regime yesterday announced the release of 327 political internees, about a third of those remaining.

Comment: Splits in the underground union may be widening. Some militants, although frustrated and discredited by the failure of the call for strikes on 10 November, apparently want to continue open resistance. The moderates evidently have regained control of the underground leadership, however, and are trying to isolate the militants by reaffirming confidence in Walesa. The government's conciliatory gesture in releasing more internees seems intended to strengthen the position of union moderates.

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PHILIPPINES: Church-State Tensions

Priests in half the parishes on the central island of Samar began a strike on Sunday to protest sedition charges filed last week against 18 church workers suspected of ties to the Communist Party of the Philippines and its military arm, the New People's Army. The strike follows recent large public demonstrations on other islands protesting the arrest of priests running "social action centers." President Marcos charged in a nationally televised speech on Sunday that some of the clergy are seeking a "bloody confrontation" with the government.

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Comment: The basically conservative Church leadership in Manila is caught between growing social activism among Church workers in the economically depressed countryside and aggressive government efforts to contain the expansion of the New People's Army by striking at its support base. Senior military leaders and members of the Catholic Bishops' Conference of the Philippines met yesterday to try to establish a dialogue, but the session is unlikely to reduce tensions. Marcos's speech clearly indicates the government intends to proceed with its campaign.

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